

Testimony of Representative Terri A. Sewell of Alabama

U.S. House of Representatives  
Transportation & Infrastructure Committee  
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Member Day

January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Thank you, Chairman Graves, Ranking Member Larsen, and members of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for the opportunity to submit testimony before you today.

First, I would like to thank this committee for their continued support of the Army Corps of Engineers' Selma River Erosion project. After years of advocacy, we successfully authorized construction in the FY24 WRDA.

Sadly, additional structural assessments and inflationary construction costs has triggered the statutory “902 limit”. Therefore, I am testifying before you once again to fully authorize construction for this project in FY26.

Flooding caused by numerous storms and hurricanes in recent years has created severe river erosion along the downtown area of Selma, Alabama. Numerous buildings along the riverbank have become structurally compromised due to this erosion, and some buildings have already collapsed into the

Alabama River. Additionally, Army Corps of Engineers officials from the Mobile District warn that the historic Edmond Pettus Bridge could be threatened if the river erosion is not addressed immediately.

As authorized in the WRDA 2022 bill, the Selma Flood Risk Management and Bank Stabilization project will reduce the risk of failure of ten historic structures along the riverbank, protect this Edmond Pettus Bridge, and provide a response plan for imminent flooding events.

As the site of the historic Bloody Sunday and Selma to Montgomery March of 1965, the preservation of the Edmund Pettus Bridge and the Selma Riverfront is vital not only to the City of Selma, but to the history of our nation. Each year, a bipartisan group of Members of Congress travels to Selma to walk across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in the footsteps of our former colleague John Lewis, honoring the courage of the people of Selma and reflecting on their pivotal role in advancing American democracy. This history must be preserved.

Moreover, yesterday marked the three-year anniversary of the severe storms and tornadoes that caused devastation across my district, including in the City of Selma. This disaster placed an unprecedented financial burden on the City to begin recovery and rebuilding efforts.

Simply put, the City of Selma desperately needs the Army Corps of Engineers project to begin as soon as possible. Further delays will only allow the erosion along the Alabama River to continue, more historic buildings will collapse into the river, and the historic

Edmund Pettus Bridge's structural integrity will remain under threat.

I thank the committee for your consideration of my request, and I look forward to working with all of you to reauthorize construction for this project in the 2026 Water Resources Development Act.